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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 002574

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SUBJECT: TAIWAN'S NEW COUNTER-TERRORISM EFFORTS

Classified By: Harry Raymond Smith, RSO, American Institute in Taiwan. Reasons: 1.4 (B) and (D)

1. (C) Summary: The American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) Regional Security Officer (RSO) met with a member of Taiwan's newly formed Counter-Terrorism Office (CTO) to discuss potential training and program participation on counter-terrorism initiatives. The structure and function of the Counter-Terrorism Office (CTO) within the Executive Yuan was discussed, to include budget issues and the breakdown of the participating Ministries. The CTO queried the RSO on different avenues of training, policy formulation and support that might be available in the U.S. End Summary.

2. (C) The American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) Regional Security Officer (RSO) met with CHIU, Tai-chin, a member of Taiwan's newly formed Counter-Terrorism Office (CTO) to discuss potential training and program participation on counter-terrorism initiatives. The purpose of the meeting was for the RSO to deliver news concerning AIT's nomination of Dr. KUO, Lin-wu, to participate in a proposed FY-2006 International Visitor Program on U.S. Foreign Policy and Counter-terrorism, set for March of 2006. KUO is expected to accept officially the program nomination once formal program preparations are announced. The program focus - to promote an understanding of U.S. foreign policy on counter-terrorism, to review efforts to increase security of international goods and people and to examine efforts to combat terrorism and terrorist financing - are all topics of critical importance to Taiwan and the CTO to capitalize on its efforts to establish and maintain this counter-terrorism initiative.

3. (C) During the meeting, Chiu reviewed the structure and function of the Counter-Terrorism Office (CTO) within the Executive Yuan (EY), to include budget issues and the breakdown of the participating Ministries. CHIU stressed that the budget for the CTO is "very generous" and the CTO is looking for efforts to gather any and all types of training on the counter-terrorism front, to include reaching out to Japan. He also provided a clearer description of the CTO, its structure and function within the Executive Yuan. CHIU stated that in June 2004 when the Legislative Yuan passed a bill calling for reorganization of the Taiwan government, a counter-terrorism steering committee was formed in November 2004, and chaired by the Premier to discuss Taiwan's counter-terrorism efforts. The committee recommended the formation of the CTO in December 2004 and it was officially started January 10, 2005. CHIU indicated that while the government reorganization was slated to take place in January of 2006, it is unlikely to happen. As a result, the Secretary General of the EY instructed the CTO to broaden their focus from just counter-terrorism issues and plan for the integration of crisis management and disaster preparedness. CHIU opined that when the reorganization does take place, the EY will create a new ministry entitled Ministry of Interior and Homeland Affairs. CHIU indicated that the CTO as it exists in the EY would be a substantial member of this proposed ministry and take over counter-terrorism, disaster preparedness and relief, crisis management and organized crime issues. Currently the Disaster Prevention and Response Commission, a lower level commission within the fire and police departments handles crisis management and disaster preparedness. CHIU indicated that the CTO was preparing itself to take over these efforts eventually, thus the need to broaden their focus.

4. (C) CHIU provided the RSO with a detailed breakdown of the CTO's structure and some of the issues they have discussed and intend to address. The CTO is composed of a head Coordinator, a Deputy Coordinator, nine working level Coordinators and four research fellows. The current head and Coordinator of the CTO is Dr. KUO, Lin-wu. KUO was chosen to head this office based on his current position within the President's office as a policy advisor for the President. CHIU indicated that the Coordinator position is rated within the Taiwan government at "level 14", which he described as a Vice Minister level. CHIU indicated that while KUO is the designated Coordinator, he still spends a great deal of his time as policy advisor to the President. The Deputy Coordinator of the CTO is currently HUANG, Zhen-feng, who has reportedly worked with the current and past Secretaries General of the EY and is primarily tasked with intra-agency coordination. The working level consists of nine coordinators all described at "level 11" within the Taiwan government and

all with specific connections to other agencies or ministries. The nine coordinators are representatives of: Department of Health, Environmental Protection Agency, Scientific Advisory Commission, Commerce/Transportation Ministry, Ministry of Interior (including National Police Agency), Atomic Energy Commission, National Security Bureau (includes all intelligence functions), Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The CTO is rounded out by four research fellows who were described as former Ministry of Defense personnel, think tank individuals and members from the DPP office.

15. (C) CHIU said he was convinced that the CTO needs any and all types of training to help develop the office, its staff members and prepare for a potential counter-terrorism issue, crisis management or a natural disaster. CHIU stated that a recent exercise in April 2005 dealt with bio-terrorism, cyber-terrorism, a toxic spill, a critical infrastructure failure and a hostage taking exercise. He described the exercise as one mired in communication and coordination problems and suggested some training might be needed. He submitted a training proposal for members of the CTO to participate in a course on Comprehensive Security Responses to Terrorism (CSRT) to be held at the Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS) in Hawaii in August 2005. The course is designed to provide designated states and countries the operational and strategic-level skills necessary to enhance their ability to combat terrorism and to cooperate with other regional nations. The CTO requests support from AIT. Further, CHIU requested consideration from AIT for Secretary General Y.Y. Lee of the EY to lead a five to six person team to the U.S. in August 2005 to visit the Department of Homeland Security and review its structure, development and staffing in hopes of preparing the CTO on its initiative to form a more responsive office to combat terrorism and respond to a crisis.

16. (C) EY Secretary General Y.Y. Lee told AIT separately that he has decided to merge the CTO and the Disaster Prevention and Response Commission into an EY Office of Homeland Security, reporting to the Premier and headed by CTO Director Kuo. Lee said that the current EY crisis management function is geared exclusively towards natural disasters, and lacks the ability to integrate into the national security apparatus in response to a major man-made incident. Lee told AIT that he plans to lead a delegation, together with Kuo, to Washington in mid-August to learn how the U.S. Department of Homeland Security integrates organizations like FEMA with offices that deal with border security and response to terrorist attacks. Kuo explained to AIT that Lee's plan would create a precursor to the planned Ministry of Homeland Security (MHS), which is scheduled to be stood up in the 2006-2007 time frame (depending on when the EY proposal is approved by the LY). Kuo said that when the MHS is created, the proposed Homeland Security Office will become a bureau-level MHS organization charged with crisis management.

17. (C) Comments: With many new governmental initiatives there are sometimes unnecessary or redundant requests for training and support. Taiwan seems to be moving ahead with this CT initiative in a positive manner. A significant element of AIT's MPP is centered on providing Taiwan with anti-terrorism training and supporting their advancement on the counter-terrorism front. Until recently, those efforts were hampered by their inability to coordinate or structure an operational office. It would appear now that this is the first step in what is hoped to be a true and comprehensive effort to strategically plan for counter-terrorism concerns, as well as take on the additional crisis management functions and disaster preparedness issues. AIT will continue to watch the efforts of the CTO and work toward common goals on the counter-terrorism front.

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